

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing the same request from a client program to multiple instances of the same server program over the same protocol, said method comprising:

transferring said same request from said client program to an intermediary;
generating a plurality of request instances of said same request using said intermediary, wherein each of said request instances of said same request corresponds to a different instance of said same server program, wherein different request instances have one of different data and different states;

buffering said request instances of said same request until said instances of said same server program are available;

transferring said request instances of said same request from said intermediary to said instances of said same server program over a computer network;

transferring a plurality of responses from said instances of said same server program to said intermediary over said computer network;

converting said responses to a uniform response; and

transferring said uniform response to said client program;

wherein said generating comprises ~~specifying target instances of said same server program based on user input to form a fan out target list, to which said request instances of said same request will be transferred;~~ supplying user input to a systems management program to form a fan out target list, wherein said fan out target list comprises target instances of said same server program to which said request instances of said same request will be transferred; passing said fan out target list to a client of said intermediary; and passing said fan out target list from said client of said intermediary to said intermediary;

wherein said target instances comprise at least one of information sources and information destinations, and

wherein said client program, said same server program and, said same protocol are not modified by said method.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Original) The method in claim 1, wherein said converting comprises selecting an operation to combine said responses.
4. (Original) The method in claim 3, wherein said operation comprises one of listing said responses, aggregating said responses, adding said responses, preparing a subset of said responses, identifying a maximum of said responses, identifying a minimum of said responses, and averaging said responses.
5. (Currently Amended) The method in claim 1, wherein said intermediary automatically creates said request instances of said same request.
6. (Cancelled).
7. (Original) The method in claim 1, wherein said unified response has an instance corresponding to said client program.
8. (Currently Amended) A method of processing the same request from a client program to multiple instances of the same server program over the same protocol, said method comprising:
 - modifying said same request to create multiple request instances of said same request, each of said request instances of said same request corresponding to a single instance of said same server program, wherein different request instances have one of different data and different states;
 - buffering said request instances of said same request until said instances of said same server program are available;
 - transferring said request instances of said same request to corresponding ones of said instances of said same server program over a computer network;
 - modifying and combining responses to said same request from said instances of said same server program to create a unified response; and

wherein said modifying of said same request comprises specifying target instances of said same server program based on user input to form a fan out target list, to which said request instances of said same request will be transferred,

wherein said target instances comprise information sources, and

wherein said client program, said same server program, and said same protocol are not modified by said method.

9. (Original) The method in claim 8, wherein an intermediary alters said same request to comply with each instance of said same server program.
10. (Currently Amended) The method in claim 9, wherein said intermediary automatically creates said request instances of said same request.
11. (Cancelled).
12. (Original) The method in claim 8, wherein said converting comprises selecting an operation to combine said responses.
13. (Original) The method in claim 12, wherein said operation comprises one of listing said responses, aggregating said responses, adding said responses, preparing a subset of said responses, identifying a maximum of said responses, identifying a minimum of said responses, and averaging said responses.
14. (Cancelled).
15. (Original) The method in claim 8, wherein said unified response has an instance corresponding to said client program.
16. (Currently Amended) A method of using a computer program to process the same request from a client program to multiple instances of the same server program over the same protocol, said method comprising:

using said computer program to transfer said same request from said client program to an intermediary;

using said computer program to generate a plurality of request instances of said same request using said intermediary, wherein each of said request instances of said same request corresponds to a different instance of said same server program, wherein different request instances have one of different data and different states;

using said computer program to buffer said request instances of said same request until said instances of said same server program are available;

using said computer program to transfer said request instances of said same request from said intermediary to said instances of said same server program over a computer network;

using said computer program to transfer a plurality of responses from said instances of said same server program to said intermediary over said computer network;

using said computer program to convert said responses to a uniform response;

using said computer program to transfer said uniform response to said client program; and

using said computer program to specify target instances of said same server program based on user input to form a fan out target list, to which said same request will be transferred when generating said plurality of said request instances of said same request,

wherein said target instances comprise information sources, and

wherein said client program, said instances of said same server program, and said same protocol are not modified by said computer program.

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Original) The method in claim 16, wherein said using said computer program to convert comprises using said computer program to select an operation to combine said responses.

19. (Original) The method in claim 18, wherein said operation comprises one of listing said responses, aggregating said responses, adding said responses, preparing a

subset of said responses, identifying a maximum of said responses, identifying a minimum of said responses, and averaging said responses.

20. (Currently Amended) The method in claim 16, wherein said intermediary automatically creates said request instances of said same request.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Original) The method in claim 16, wherein said unified response has an instance corresponding to said client program.

23. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for processing the same request from a client program to multiple instances of the same server program over the same protocol, said method comprising:

transferring said same request from said client program to an intermediary;

generating a plurality of request instances of said same request using said intermediary, wherein each of said request instances of said same request corresponds to a different instance of said same server program, wherein different request instances have one of different data and different states;

buffering said request instances of said same request until said instances of said same server program are available;

transferring said request instances of said same request from said intermediary to said instances of said same server program over a computer network;

transferring a plurality of responses from said instances of said same server program to said intermediary over said computer network;

converting said responses to a uniform response; and

transferring said uniform response to said client program; and

wherein said generating comprises specifying target instances of said same server program based on user input to form a fan out target list, to which said request instances of said request will be transferred,

wherein said target instances comprise information sources, and

wherein said client program, said instances of said same server program, and said same protocol are not modified by said method.

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Original) The program storage device in claim 23, wherein said converting comprises selecting an operation to combine said responses.

26. (Original) The program storage device in claim 25, wherein said operation comprises one of listing said responses, aggregating said responses, adding said responses, preparing a subset of said responses, identifying a maximum of said responses, identifying a minimum of said responses, and averaging said responses.

27. (Currently Amended) The program storage device in claim 23, wherein said intermediary automatically creates said request instances of said same request.

28. (Cancelled).

29. (Original) The program storage device in claim 23, wherein said unified response has an instance corresponding to said client program.

30. (Currently Amended) An intermediary which can be stored on a computer readable medium for processing the same request from a client program to multiple instances of the same server program over the same protocol, said intermediary comprising:

a converter for generating a plurality of request instances of said same request, wherein each of said request instances of said same request corresponds to a different instance of said same server program, wherein said converter is further adapted to specify target instances of said same server program based on user input to form a fan out target list, to which said request instances of said request will be transferred over a computer network, wherein different request instances have one of different data and different states;

a buffer for buffering said request instances of said same request until said instances of said same server program are available; and

a response combiner for converting said responses received from multiple instances of said same server program over said computer network to a uniform response, wherein said target instances comprise information sources, and wherein said client program, said same server program, and said same protocol are not modified by said intermediary.

31. (Previously Presented) The intermediary in claim 30, wherein said response combiner selects an operation to combine said responses.

32. (Previously Presented) The intermediary in claim 31, wherein said operation comprises one of listing said responses, aggregating said responses, adding said responses, preparing a subset of said responses, identifying a maximum of said responses, identifying a minimum of said responses, and averaging said responses,

33. (Currently Amended) The intermediary in claim 30, wherein said converter automatically creates said request instances of said same request upon receipt of said same request.

34. (Cancelled).

35. (Previously Presented) The intermediary in claim 30, wherein said unified response has an instance corresponding to said client program.